



UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

WASHINGTON

11-5546

June 17, 1959

Dear Mr. Hughes:

In response to your request for views regarding H.R. 3880, a Bill "to create the Freedom Commission etc.....," this Agency submits the following comments.

In general, we feel that the Bill would provide for duplication of many existing programs, and would create some overseas information problems.

As you know, this Agency reaches audiences abroad on a continuing basis with factual information about Sino-Soviet Communist doctrines and policies, as well as the objectives and tactics of international Communism. This is in furtherance of the mission of "...unmasking and countering hostile attempts to distort or to frustrate the objectives and policies of the United States," assigned by the President in 1953 when the information program was established in an independent agency.

The proposed Freedom Academy includes a program devoted to the teaching of foreign students about Communism and methods to counteract its adverse effects. The Academy as an institution and this program in particular present several inherent problems. First, establishment of the Academy, as well as the Special Commission and the Joint Committee, would be interpreted by many audiences abroad as a further sign of what they consider to be the already excessive preoccupation of the United States with Communism. Second, the program for foreign students would be very limited and negative in scope, teaching them essentially to be against Communism rather than for anything. Third, the program for non-American students would be interpreted by many foreign audiences as an attempt by the United States to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign nations

Mr. Phillip S. Hughes  
Assistant Director for  
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in a way which would affect their relationships with otherwise friendly countries and governments. Finally, the effectiveness of the individual foreign participants would be severely restricted by the fact that they would be readily identified upon return to their country of origin, and their future conduct or activity attributed to United States' influence.

The Agency would, of course, welcome as a source of potential recruitment for its overseas program Americans, otherwise qualified, who complete the training which the proposed Academy is intended to provide. We believe, however, that increased support to existing facilities and institutions would permit present training programs to be augmented on a more economical basis.

The U.S. Information Agency presently participates in and cooperates with other Governmental and private training programs, including armed service colleges, devoted to all phases of the international Communist problem. Moreover, within the statutory limitation proscribing domestic informational activities, the Agency makes available to other Government agencies, the press and Congress, to the fullest extent possible, all pertinent information in its possession concerning the Communist propaganda threat to the United States and the Free World.

To sum up, from our point of view there are overseas information problems inherent in H.R. 3880, and most of the objectives sought by H.R. 3880 could be achieved more efficiently and economically by modification and expansion of existing programs rather than by creation of the proposed new organizations and programs.

Sincerely yours,

Harry Tyson Carter  
General Counsel and  
Congressional Liaison

*Mr. Houston*  
MEMORANDUM FOR: ~~THE DIRECTOR~~ *And [unclear]*

This is for information.

Attached is a copy of USIA's comment to the Bureau of the Budget on Congressman Herlong's Freedom Commission bill.

[Redacted]

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

19 June 1959  
(DATE)

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FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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